



# News Release

USDA Forest Service

Cibola National Forest and Grasslands

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## For Immediate Release

### *Kiowa/Rita Blanca National Grasslands to begin fire restrictions on June 16*

**Albuquerque, NM. May 31, 2013** – Cibola National Forest and Grasslands Acting Forest Supervisor Joe Norrell announced that the Kiowa/Rita Blanca National Grasslands will begin Stage I fire restrictions on Sunday, June 16. “The grasslands have been experiencing severe, ongoing drought, which has resulted in a high fire danger,” Norrell said. “Implementing Stage I fire restrictions will help decrease the likelihood of human-caused wildfires and protect resources and public safety,” he added.

Although the grasslands will be in fire restrictions, there are many activities that can still be enjoyed on the grasslands, such as picnicking, hiking and camping. However, please use extreme caution when you’re on the forest, as conditions are very dry and wildfires can start from smoldering cigarettes or sparks from engines.

Stage I fire restrictions include:

1. Building, maintaining, attending or using a fire, campfire, charcoal, coal, or wood stove, except within a Forest Service developed recreation site, or improved site. **Exceptions:** The use of petroleum-fueled stoves, lanterns or heating devices are allowed providing such devices meet the fire underwriter’s specifications for safety and has a turn-off valve.
2. Smoking, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable material.
3. Possessing, discharging or using any kind of firework or other pyrotechnic device.

There are some exemptions to these restrictions and are noted on the restrictions order that is posted on the Cibola’s web page: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/cibola> in the “Alerts and Notices” section.

“The Kiowa and Rita Blanca National Grasslands staff work closely to coordinate fire restrictions with the cities, counties, state, tribal and federal organizations that border the district,” said District Ranger Mike Atkinson. “This collaboration helps ensure the public receives consistent information about local fire restrictions.”

Current fire restrictions for the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands are:

- **Black Kettle and McClellan Creek National Grasslands:** No restrictions.
- **Kiowa and Rita Blanca National Grasslands:** Will begin Stage I fire restrictions on June 16.
- **Magdalena Ranger District:** Will begin Stage I fire restrictions for the San Mateo, Datil and Magdalena Mountain units on June 3 . The Bear and Gallinas units will not be in restrictions.
- **Mountainair Ranger District:** In Stage II Fire Restrictions; going into Stage III restrictions on June 10.
- **Mt. Taylor Ranger District:** In Stage I Fire Restrictions; going into Stage II restrictions on June 10. The district's personal woodcutting permit season is delayed.
- **Sandia Ranger District:** In Stage II Fire Restrictions; going into Stage III restrictions on June 10.

**Useful fire websites:**

- Southwest Coordination Center: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/swcc/>
- New Mexico Fire Information: <http://nmfireinfo.com/>
- Texas Interagency Coordination Center: <http://ticc.tamu.edu/>
- National Interagency Fire Center: [www.nifc.gov](http://www.nifc.gov)
- FireWise: [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)
- Fire Restrictions across the US: <http://firerestrictions.us/>

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